

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7314

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: POLITICAL CAULDRON SIMMERS QUIETLY

1. SUMMARY. WEEKEND WITNESSED ADVENT OF NEW CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL PARTY LED BY ESTABLISHMENT FIGURE GAROUFALIAS; UNION OF NEW POLITICAL FORCES AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST UNION WHICH TOGETHER JOINED CENTER UNION; STATEMENTS OF EX-PMS MARKEZINIS AND STEPHANOPOULOS AND SHARP ATTACK ON CARAMANLIS BY EX-DEPUTY JOHN ZIGDIS. MIKIS THEODORAKIS COMMENTED THAT UNITY IS OF OVER-RIDING IMPORTANCE AND ASSERTED THAT CARAMANLIS REPRESENTS ONLY SOLUTION. ANDREAS PAPANDREOU REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED RESISTANCE GROUP "DEMOCRATIC DEFENSE" IN PASOK. CABINET RESIGNATION TO CLEAR DECKS FOR CARETAKER GOVERNMENT AND LIFTING MARTIAL LAW EXPECTED SHORTLY. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS UNRAVELING SOLWLY, ADVENT OF "NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION" WITH PETROS GAROUFALIAS AS PROVISIONAL CHAIRMAN SPARKED INTEREST ON EXTREME RIGHT. WHILE CHARTER AND PLATFORM OF NEW PARTY ARE TO BE ANNOUNCED LATER IN WEEK, NEW GROUPING IS EXPECTED TO HAVE APPEAL TO RIGHTISTS/ROYALISTS/ ESTABLISHMENT BUSINESSMEN/SOME ARMED FORCES MEMBERS AND TO THOSE NOT ABLE TO STRIKE BARGAIN WITH ANY OTHER POLITICAL FORMATION. GAROUFALIAS WAS LATE PM GEORGE PAPANDREOU'S MINISTER OF DEFENSE IN 1964 WHEN FORMER RESIGNED OVER QUESTION OF JURISDICTION OF

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MINISTER OF DEFENSE, PARTICULARLY AS RELATED TO ASPIDA

INVESTIGATION. GAROUFALIAS, WHO IS WEALTHY GREEK BUSINESSMAN, ANNOUNCED OCTOBER 5 THAT NEW PARTY WOULD PROTECT DEMOCRACY FROM DANGER OF NEW TOTALITARIAN REGIME AND CHARGED CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED TO CONSOLIDATE DEMOCRATIC ORDER AND TO HANDLE CYPRUS ISSUE PROPERLY. NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION CLAIMS TO HAVE SUPPORT OF ABOUT 20 EX-DEPUTIES FROM BOTH ERE AND CENTER UNION, ALTHOUGH NEWSPAPERS LIST ONLY ELEVEN SUCH. NEW PARTY WHILE ALLEGEDLY ROYALIST HAS NOT INDICATED ITS STAND ON RESTORATION OF MONARCHY AND MAY FEEL IT PRUDENT IN ITS OWN SELF-INTEREST TO AVOID DOING SO UNTIL AFTER NOVEMBER 17.

3. WEEKEND WITNESSED BALANCE SHEET OF POLITICAL PARTIES GAIN ONE AND DROP FOUR AS MINISTER OF INDUSTRY PROTOPAPPAS' SOCIALIST MOVEMENT AMALGAMATED WITH NEW POLITICAL FORCES LED BY MINISTERS PESMAZOGLOU, MANGAKIS AND GENERAL GEORGE IORDANIDIS. LATTER CONSOLIDATED MOVEMENT IN TURN REPORTEDLY MERGED WITH CENTER UNION. "DEMOCRATIC DEFENSE", ACTIVE IN RESISTANCE EFFORTS DURING MILITARY GOVERNMENT PERIOD, ANNOUNCED OCTOBER 5 ITS INTENTION TO SUPPORT ANDREAS PAPANDREOU'S PANHELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT. BOTH MERGERS CAN BETTER BE CHARACTERIZED AS GESTURES OF GOODWILL AND MORAL SUPPORT THAN PRODUCT OF REFINED POLITICAL EXPERIENCE, FINANCE OR PROVEN FORMER DEPUTIES. FOURTH POLITICAL MOVEMENT REMOVING ITSELF FROM COMPETITION IS PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF SPYROS MARKEZINIS WHO ANNOUNCED DECISION OT TO RUN BECAUSE NEW ELECTORAL LAW "IS PROHIBITIVE FOR SMALL PARTIES." EX-PRIME MINISTER CHARGED PRESENT ELECTORAL LAW PROMOTES CREATION OF STRONG COALITIONS WHICH COULD LEAD TO POLARIZATION AND DISTORTION OF ACTUAL VOTING RESULTS. MARKEZINIS SAID THAT HE WAS PARTICULARLY SORRY NOT TO BE PARTICIPATING IN ELECTIONS SINCE OPPORTUNITY WILL BE MISSED TO EXPLAIN TRUTH OF "WELL-INTENDED EXPERIMENT OF LAST AUGUST" (SIC), ADDING, "IT IS HARDLY A CONSOLATION FOR ME TO KNOW THAT HAD I NOT BEEN OVER-THROWN LAST NOVEMBER, THE UNFORTUNATE TRAGEDY OF CYPRUS WOULD CERTAINLY NOT HAVE OCCURRED..." EX-PREMIER S. STEPHANOPOULOS (1965-66) ISSUED STATEMENT OCTOBER 4 FOLLOWING MEETING WITH PM IN WHICH HE SAID THAT HE INFORMED CARAMANLIS THAT ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT INTEND TO PARTICIPATE IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS, IT HAD BEEN DECIDED THAT HIS COLLEAGUES WHO WISHED TO JOIN FORCES WITH NEW DEMOCRACY COULD DO SO ON EQUAL TERMS REGARDLESS OF ORIGIN. THIS CLEARS WAY FOR NUMBER OF STEPHANOPOULOS APOSTATES OF FDK VINTAGE TO SUPPORT

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CARAMANLIS' MOVEMENT.

4. IN VEIN MORE CHARACTERISTIC OF CAMPAIGN POLEMICS, EX-DEPUTY JOHN ZIGDIS (CU), WHO IS RUMORED TO BE CONSIDERING SHIFTING TO PASOK, ISSUED RELEASE POINTEDLY CRITICIZING CARAMANLIS. ZIGDIS SAID CARAMANLIS HAD BEEN INTOXICATED BY UNEXPECTED FORTUNE OF PREMIERSHIP AND WITH "MENTALITY REMINISCENT OF CAESAR" IMPOSED "HIS PERSONAL STATE OF THE MESSIAH." EX-DEPUTY ZIGDIS CONTINUED

THAT CARAMANLIS CONCEIVED ELECTORAL COUP ON BASIS OF "NATIONAL REASONS." "A PARLIAMENT ELECTED UNDER THESE CONDITIONS SHALL NATURALLY HAVE NO AUTHORITY AND SHALL BE THE CAUSE FOR ENDLESS DISPUTES." ON OTHER HAND, CARAMANLIS GAINED ENDORSEMENT BY COMPOSER MIKIS THEODORAKIS WHO ISSUED STATEMENT IN CONNECTION WITH HIS OCTOBER 9 CONCERT AT OLYMPIC STADIUM. "THERE IS NO OTHER SOLUTION THAN CARAMANLIS. ONCE CARAMANLIS IS GONE I SEE THE TANKS COMING AGAIN." THEODORAKIS ADDED, "WHAT IS NECESSARY NOW IS UNITY." REFERRING TO ANDREAS PAPANDREOU HE ASKED WHY PAPANDREOU DIDN'T WANT THE UNITY OF RESISTANCE FORCES. "IF HE WANTS TO CREATE COMMUNISTS, AS HE PUTS ITS, LET HIM COME WITH US. THE LEFT IS LARGE SPHERE WHICH CAN INCLUDE HIM TOO; HE MAY EVEN BECOME ITS LEADER."

5. SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY VENTURED SAFE SPECULATION THAT CARAMANLIS CABINET WOULD RESIGN SOMETIME THIS WEEK AND GOG WOULD MAKE EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT FIRST TO CONCLUDE ALL FORMALITIES REQUIRED BEFORE CARETAKE GOVERNMENT SET UP FOR HOLDING ELECTIONS, INCLUDING LIFTING MARTIAL LAW THROUGHOUT COUNTRY EXCEPT FOR EVROS REGION AND CERTAIN ISLANDS CLOSE TO TURKISH BORDER.

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